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229

DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

SPOT COMMENTARY

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IRAQ-KUWAIT: SITUATION REPORT #746

Political Developments

Iraq: Creating New Facts in Kirkuk

[REDACTED] local Iraqi officials are denying returning Kurdish refugees access to the city of Kirkuk, claiming that the city is "an Arab town." Kurds fleeing Kirkuk told foreign journalists this week that Iraq's army is moving truckloads of Arabs into the town, destroying Kurdish homes, and forcing Kurds to leave. A [REDACTED] official-- [REDACTED] --told [REDACTED] that Turkomans are also being prevented from returning to the city. The prewar population of Kirkuk was probably composed of a slight majority of Sunni Arabs with roughly equal numbers of Turkomans, and Kurds, and a smaller number of Christians. [REDACTED]

Comment: Saddam Husayn has no intention of relinquishing Kirkuk and its oil resources to the Kurds. He may be stalling talks with Kurdish rebel leaders until his resettlement of this disputed city is complete. He probably is confident that the UN or multinational coalition will not take military action over this issue, that their forces will leave Iraq soon, and that he can risk taking a more hardline stance to force a settlement. [REDACTED]

Iraq-Iran: Tensions Remain

[REDACTED] Meanwhile, Baghdad lodged another formal protest with the United Nations yesterday, claiming that Iran set up two platoon positions inside Iraq in the central border region last week. [REDACTED] press reports indicate that small clashes involving Iraqi military forces, Iran's Revolutionary Guard, and Iraqi and Iranian dissidents occurred regularly between April and late last week. [REDACTED]

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WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM

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✓ GATES
✓ SITTMANN
✓ HILL
✓ SUNUNU
✓ CARD
✓ JACKSON
✓ VP MILADV
✓ **PEOL**
✓ LAMPLEY
✓ POPADUK
✓ ROSTOW
✓ HAASS
✓ CHARLES
✓ HULL
✓ GOMPERT
✓ HEWETT
✓ BASORA
✓ BURNS
✓ HUTCHINGS
✓ KANTER
✓ DAVIS
✓ FRY
✓ GORDON
✓ HAYDEN
✓ PILLING
✓ PONEMAN
✓ TOBEY
✓ WILSON
✓ BEERS
✓ FRASURE
✓ CANAS
✓ CHAMBERLAIN
✓ DYKE
✓ NEEDLES
✓ PRYCE
✓ JOHNSON
✓ PACELLI
✓ PAAL
✓ WATSON
✓ DEAL
✓ BARTH
✓ MELBY
✓ LUNDSAGER
✓ WORKING
✓ KITCHEN
✓ PAVITT
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Comment: The planned Iraqi counterattack is likely to be small and to have the limited goal of recovering territory. Apprehension about each side's intentions and the impact of weeks of small clashes in the border region, however, increase the risk of further skirmishing between Iraq and Iran. The proximity of units and the occasional spilling of counterinsurgency operations over the border in both directions probably will prompt Baghdad to keep its forces near the border at an increased state of readiness. Iran's regular Army is likely to keep its units away from the border fighting while Revolutionary Guard units probably will continue to provide limited covert support for Iraqi dissident operations. [REDACTED]